

Chau (to [redacted], 13 Feb: 1966

be

1. Main issue: is program to/SVN, or US/CIA? If latter:
 - a. Chau will quit.
 - b. GVN officials--prov/dist chiefs, generals--won't support it; if it's an American program, let them run it (even though in the long run its success is important to them ((question to Vann: "would they support it if it were a GVN program?" "You know how things run over here)). ((V: moreover, they won't support a program for which Americans will take the credit if it succeeds.))
 - c. The objective is to induce the people to take up self-defense; an American army ~~with~~ (PATs) protecting them will not accomplish that.

C: You could pacify SVN with American troops; but it would take 3 million men, and it would last only as long as they stayed.

*thus make VC think's
that on
existing,
satisfactory
order*

Objective: self-defense by the villagers: get them, in the end, to regard Communist guerrillas and terrorists as criminals, on whom they ought to report to the police.

(Even an efficient American program, so long as it did not lead the people to believe that the GVN had reformed itself and to expect that the GVN would continue to support and protect them after the ~~xxxxxx~~ Americans had left, would not induce a spirit of involvement, of fighting to preserve a GVN/SVN system of government.) Moreover, the Americans are so much more rich and powerful, the SVN officials would figure they had little to contribute).

Moreover, the specific CIA connotation is costly. The generals are all afraid of CIA: not only of assassination, but of being ruined, by having accusations of corruption or mistresses laid against them (of course, these would usually not have to be invented).

This might not matter if CIA were: a) more sensitive to the importance of avoiding the appearance of American control (Are they not sensitive to the appearance so far as the people are concerned? Anyway, they don't seem concerned about exposing their role to officials.) b) If they had a better sense of the larger goal of pacification.

The PATs, at best, simply replace the PFs, who are not doing their job. But: a) they will always be too small to cover the territory, even as PFs (Alternative: make the PFs do their job); b) They have not and cannot pacify: they will not organize the people or induce self-defense.

IV: it is important but not absolutely essential to keep C: which requires CIA reform, i.e., keeping their hands off. What is essential to success is that CIA change its policy. (Baker: they are not suited to a large overt program like this; they don't have trained staff for it; so they bring in inexperienced youngsters, and don't supervise them. *[Also, security; lack of cover]*

Voting appears now just one more thing the government wants them to do; they will be doing it "for the government," because they have to.

Chau: 12 Aug 66

1. Now people uninterested in elections; not just because CA rather than legislative; they had legislative under Diem; and not just because rigged. Don't feel it gives them any real control over their lives; doesn't affect village conditions. ~~exist~~ Before they can be interested in national gov, must feel that they can influence their own environment; must become interested in power, development. Thus, must have village democracy. But they must become interested in that, too; it must be tied in with possibilities for development. Cadre not essential but "very necessary, important," in showing them possibilities (i.e., showing them what gov can do for them... assuming it will do something).

Then, true village democracies elect reps to national assembly; starting with those secure (3000?). Such an assembly could challenge even Corps commander: force for reform, even in military matters.

(Don't have national assembly elections till there is true village elections; can't have that without preparation.)

2. Some Americans think: peasant is very simple; only cares what you give ~~him~~; won't ask, Who do cadre represent, are they pro or anti-US, pro- or anti* VC or GVN, just, What can they do for him? He will be grateful, oppose VC.

Very plausible, tempting picture. But not true. Peasant wants power, force for change, voice in affairs; and although has never had national power, he did have greater power in past over village affairs than at present: had more power under French than under Diem or now.

3. Peasant has four kinds of problems: a) Low standards, poverty, underdevelopment; b) Corrupt system: soldiers, gov, landlords; c) VC; d) war. What will eventually interest him is if he can be convinced he can be rid of these four evils, by own efforts plus gov help.

4. Formula for PSD: 1) People will participate in PSD; but first: 2) self-government; but first, 3) organization for development (to interest in self-gov); but first, to allow org, 4) ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ find out wants, for development and for ending corrupt gov; but first (5) remove VC, provide security.

DE: This is necessary, even with good gov; but will not be enough, without good gov (district and above), good behavior by troops, good security. Environment must improve, or cadre will achieve nothing. In Kien Hoa, people had good prov/dist chiefs. Chau: I agree. Cadre will not do job, with things as they are. nor can cadre adequately face P50.

However, cadre are to educate system; send reports up through channels, as well as by-passin , to educate. Americans don't understand VNese: "bad" people are bad, but it is mainly because they don't know how to do good, how to achieve any progress; dist chief starts by dispairing of pacifying; needs only to be shown what he can do. e.s. Census Finance .

responsive gov; representative gov;
restrained gov. (Have more now: people
want 1-3 more). Foster recourse.

Chau: 2

5. Chau: reforms can start at bottom; in fact, must, because unrealistic to think they will come at top. But prov chief can achieve much, as C did. All can be educated: Corps commanders could be briefed, on necessary changes in environment.

But for reform at bottom, agree that at minimum, lower levels must be insulated from top, which must accept, not intervene. "You embarrass me by mentioning Binh Dinh, where Be was not allowed to stay." And agree: achievement is now no way to get ahead.

(At least, US can protect non-VC nationalists from destruction by reactionaries: e.g., Cao.)

6. US should share responsibility for policies with GVN; should say to Directory, "You are not representative gov; have ~~no~~ right to rule, don't speak for people. We support people, support you so long as you work for people, not otherwise." Impossible that this approach would be "resisted"; although they will resist if they sense that US has no real policy.

Tri Quang and others are wrong, in their actions; but in their thinking and motivation, they are not wrong, and reflect thinking of many people.

Many say: US wants to influence, but not to accept responsibility. It should accept responsibility.

((DE: ironic: this is also what people say of Tri Quang. Chau: Buddhists cannot take part in gov, and be true to Buddhism. DE: then they are irresponsible, if they refuse to accept responsibility for consequences of their actions, or pretend they are not acting as politicians.)

((Much truth in this: a) US doesn't want responsibility, in part because of colonialist charge (NVN describe this as neo-colonialism), and (b) because it has wanted freedom to detach itself if necessary from SVN; and c) because it has not felt sufficient expertise, experience, known what it wanted here.))

7. US mistake is to think that country can be saved by one individual or small group of individuals; wrong; many must participate, many must be changed, system must change. One man, no matter how good, will be corrupted by power.

(Compare to Tri Quang statement to Tak Oka: "The Americans aid people who want to save the country only by small groups, and out of personal sympathy for this or that individual. This only contributes to the division of the country.")

8. Chau would feel "uneasy" about US intervening if gov had true representative assembly: then, could be informed, consulted... (Garrett: Budd position on calling to intervene against Ky: Ky gov was US creation anyway. i.e., calling on US not to intervene for Budd as to restrain Ky, withdraw support.)

((We must somehow escape from the posture that we are fighting to preserve the present GVN: Lichtheim: "a crusade to help an Oriental cardboard Mussolini in Saigon maintain his comic-opera opera regime a week or a month longer...has ceased even to be funny."